

Comments and Concerns Regarding Asian Carp pursuant to the Illinois Senate

Environmental Committee Hearing on January 21, 2010

The Agenda was fairly comprehensive with a few exceptions:

1. What effort has been made in the past to locate 'game fish' in the Sanitary & Ship Canal between the SEPA station on Torrence Ave. and the 6th station down stream toward Lemont?
 - a. The removal of the Game Fish that were present might be compared to past efforts to support their presence.
 - b. Game Fish (with the exception of a Walleye) including River Sturgeon (not noted as present in the December fish kill) are precluded from migration into the Sanitary and Ship Canal by the electric gates.
 - c. Salmon from Lake Michigan migrate up Thorn Creek (107 sq. mi. watershed) over 30 stream miles each fall to Chicago Heights past the Outfall of the Thorn Creek Basin Sanitary District and possibly to the base of the Dam at 26th Street on Sauk Trail Lake.
 - d. The Sauk Trail Lake Dam controls Storm Water in territory of the MWRD-GC within the Cook County Forest Preserve and has silt removed two times previously. The 60 sq. mile portion of Thorn Creek above this dam contains eroding banks as this stream descends at an average of 10 feet per mile.
 - e. Sauk Trail presently supports a bass population even though it contains about ten feet of silt and is the potential site for releasing game fish (including River Sturgeon) that could migrate to the Sanitary & Ship Canal where they could facilitate the control of Asian Carp fry.
2. Fellow kayakers have been knocked from their boats at the confluence of the Illinois and Fox Rivers. It was noted that commercial fishing will be allowed both upstream and down of electric gates using snagging nets that would capture the large Asian Carp. What is the time frame for implementing this revision?
 - a. The time frame is necessary to make the stream safer for boaters and coordinating the construction of the Fish Processing Industry.
 - b. Consideration should be given to winter weather snagging as these fish will be less mobile and easier to catch.
 - c. Possibly temporary the 'Air Bubble, Acoustic Barriers' (mentioned at the hearing as being evaluated) could be employed to contain these fish in estuaries where they can be snagged.
3. Utilizing this viable and productive food source for feeding starving populations appears to be a reality in the near future. As Mr. Schafer discussed the need for a Title III designation with the FDA and the obstacles encountered, what efforts can the "People of the State of Illinois" take to foster this effort and develop a sustainable food source?
 - a. It was mentioned that this food source could be processed with an extended shelf life for distribution to disaster victims.
 - b. Mr. Schafer indicated to me (after the hearing) that 8 ounce portions of daily rations could be packaged and air dropped to the starving population on Haiti.
 - c. Mr. Schafer noted also, in the hearing that special interest have interfered in efforts to get this fish classified.

In summary, as it has been validated that these Asian Carp do not pose a threat to Sport Fishing in the Great Lakes and in fact are already there. And, it is also know that Asian Carp are a natural predator of the Zebra Mussel (eat their larvae). Other Carp eat the developed Mussel Shell which may have assisted in fostering the Sport Fishing industry. There continues to be a need to separate the Lake Michigan Watershed from the Mississippi Watershed.

Being that Illinois has taken the lead in the development of Watershed Educational Tools, (<http://www.rmms.illinois.edu/website/rmms/viewer.htm>), I support this effort to educate our citizens on these important issues and would like to see immediate action of the issues I have presented.

Thank you, Charles Dieringer, Ed.D.,

(Mother Nature's Plumber and operator of the 'instream maintenance machine- menziusa.com)

Peace & Justice Ministries, St. Mark U.C.C.

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